From matisse Sat Apr 20 13:23:19 1991
Date: Sat, 20 Apr 91 13:23:14 pdt
From: matisse (J Matisse Enzer)
To: kaj, kerwit
Subject: Whole Earth Review on Disk
Cc: hlr

Kelly Teevan, Keith Jordan, Howard Rheingold:

This is a proposal for creating a distributing Disk-based copies of selected material from Whole Earth Review.

Howard has seen this already but I'm Cc'ing him so he'll be in on any discussion.

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When the NREN article ("Highways of the Mind") came out I became so excited I was inspired to create a computer-Fax file version so I could fax the article (including graphics) at high resolution to people around the country. In order to do this I had to create a disk-based version of the article which I did by taking the ASCII (text-only) version given to me by the author (Roger Karraker) and manually reconciling it with the (slightly different) published version. I then got copies of the original artwork from WER and scanned all the graphics onto disk; I then copied the scanned graphics into my disk-based version of the article.

Since tbat time I have supplied several people with either ASCII versions of the article through e-mail (it has spread out through the Net) and/or copies of the fully formatted MS Word 4.0 file including graphics by mailing them disks. Also, people on the WELL have been able to download the the ASCII and MS Word files directly. Some people have asked for and received permission to reprint the article in their newsletters.

I would like to make more WER articles available on disk, in particular to WER and WELL subscribers through internal marketing (notices in WER and on the WELL).

What I propose is that as each issue of WER comes out Howard and I select a portion of the current issue (perhaps 1 to 5 articles and/or short pieces per issue). WER would supply me with ASCII files and/or typsetting files along with clean copies of any artwork. I would then create fully formatted disk based versions of the material.

Whole Earth would prominantly advertise the availability of the disks in the WER and perhaps elsewhere, I would announce the availability on the WELL. The disks would be sold for a price that depended upon how much material was on that particular disk - one disk for each issue of WER. I would be paid a percentage of sales and would have an exclusive right to perform this service for some fixed period, perhaps 2 years.

I would handle production, duplication of disks, and fufillment of orders including the costs of packaging and postage.

WER would have no up-front cash costs and no operating expenses except my share of the revenue. Payments for the disks would be

fully-formatted version (WELL subscribers downloading the fully-formatted version would be asked to pay a fee to Whole Earth equal to half the cost of buying the disks)

I would expect sales with proper marketing to reach 100 disks a quarter within 2 or 3 issues and then potentially much more. I would hope to see gross sales be between $3000 and $4000 the first year with Whole Earth retaining between $1000 and $1400. And of course there is no financial risk to Whole Earth or Point.

I already have the NREN article and there may be one or two other items from the current issue we could add to it for a first Disk which would be advertised in the next issue. (I would think disks should be available about a month after each issue is published.)

If this proposal is of interest to you let me know and we can get together and talk about creating a formal contract.

-Matisse

From hlr Sat Apr 20 13:50:53 1991
Date: Sat, 20 Apr 91 13:50:50 pdt
From: hlr (Howard Rheingold)
To: kaj, kerwit, matisse
Subject: Re: Whole Earth Review on Disk

I love this idea. And I'm impressed at how well Matisse got together the NREN stuff on his own initiative. I think he knows what he's doing. The cost to us is zero, the financial potential is modest but not insignificant, and the cultural experiment is very worth while.